



TULARE COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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Tulare County Health Officials Urge Residents to Celebrate Halloween Safely During Ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic

Public Health Releases Recommendations for Halloween During COVID-19

VISALIA, CA - The COVID-19 virus continues to spread throughout Tulare County, and Public Health officials urge residents to take necessary precautions to protect themselves by participating in low-risk activities and celebrations this Halloween. COVID-19 continues to pose a risk to the health of our communities and to our most vulnerable populations. Residents need to be aware of high-risk environments for spread of COVID-19 and should avoid such high-risk activities during the month of October.

Tulare County Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Haught strongly encourages community members to follow the public health guidelines and recommendations for slowing the spread of COVID-19 by not gathering with others outside your immediate household.

"Many traditional Halloween activities can be high-risk for spreading viruses, including COVID-19," shared Dr. Karen Haught, Tulare County Health Officer. "There are several safer, alternative ways to participate in Halloween festivities while reducing the risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus. If you may have COVID-19 or you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should not participate in any in-person Halloween festivities and should not give out candy to trick-or-treaters."

To reduce COVID-19 cases and deaths in Tulare County, officials urge residents to AVOID these high-risk activities to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Halloween gatherings or parties with non-household members
- Carnivals, festivals, and haunted house attractions are high-risk for spread of COVID-19
- Attending crowded costume parties held indoors
- Going to an indoor haunted house where people may be crowded together and screaming
- Using alcohol or drugs, which can cloud judgment and increase risky behaviors
- Participating in traditional trick-or-treating where treats are handed to children who go door to door, because it is difficult to maintain proper social distancing on porches and at front doors
- Trunk-or-treat events where treats are handed out from trunks of cars lined up in large parking lots
- Going on hayrides or tractor rides with people who are not in your household

Public Health officials urge residents to use alternative means when celebrating Halloween safely this year with these lower-risk activities:

- Carving or decorating pumpkins with members of your household and displaying them
- Decorating your house, apartment, or living space
- Doing a Halloween scavenger hunt where children are given lists of Halloween-themed things to look for while they walk outdoors from house to house admiring Halloween decorations at a distance
- Having a virtual Halloween costume contest
- Having a Halloween movie night with people you live with
- Having a scavenger hunt-style trick-or-treat search with your household members in or around your home rather than going from house to house
- No-contact online or virtual pumpkin carving/costume contests
- Car parades that comply with public health guidance for vehicle-based parades, including:
 - Drive-by events or contests where individuals dress up or decorate their vehicles and drive by "judges" who are appropriately physically distanced



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- Drive-through events where individuals remain in their vehicles and drive through an area with Halloween displays
- Drive-in events where individuals can receive a treat bag (limited to commercially packaged, non-perishable treats) or take-away item from an organizer while the participants remain in their vehicles

The most important thing is to keep your loved ones safe and healthy and to not risk their health by gathering with those outside your own home. COVID-19 cases have been seen to spike in Tulare County following holiday gatherings, so to avoid a spike in cases, public health officials are urging residents to cooperate. Following the public health recommendations and reducing the amount of COVID-19 cases will help Tulare County meet the required thresholds for lifting restrictions on businesses and fully reopening local schools, allowing children to return to the classroom.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Tulare County, officials strongly urge everyone to practice both social and physical distancing of six feet or more between persons and to refrain from social gatherings. Residents must always wear a face mask or covering while in environments where physical distancing is not possible and while in public settings. In addition, everyone is encouraged to frequently wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer, regularly disinfect high-touch surfaces, and stay home if you are sick or instructed to isolate/quarantine by a medical or public health professional.

For more information about COVID-19, visit www.tchhsa.org/ncov and www.covid19.tularecounty.ca.gov

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